

# Parents as Leaders



2003-2004

## Learning, Growing, Making Changes

PARENTS AS LEADERS  
Is a part of the Wisconsin  
Personnel Development Project,  
funded by the Wisconsin  
Department of Health and Family  
Services, Birth to Three Program

## Is PALs Right for You ?

Are you a parent, foster parent, grandparent, or other caregiver?

Do you care for a child who is six years old or younger, and who has a developmental delay, disability, or chronic illness?

Would you like an opportunity to meet leaders and policy-makers, to ask questions about issues important to you and your family?

Would you like to meet other families to exchange information, support, ideas, and resources?

Would you like to enhance your skills for working in partnership with service providers, public schools, and community agencies?

Did you answer "yes" to more than one of these questions?

Then Parents as Leaders is for you!

*"I know **what** to do.  
I know **how** to do it"*

## What is PALs?

PALs is a group of parents and other caregivers who meet together five times during a year to:

- ♦ Learn about resources for children with special needs;
- ♦ Learn more about leadership and advocacy roles for parents in Birth to Six;
- ♦ Explore topics of interest to group members, such as communicating with schools, inclusive education, futures planning, helping children make friends and financial resources.
- ♦ Learn how to access county and state resources;
- ♦ Meet some of the key leaders who make the policies and run the programs that affect children with special needs and their families in Wisconsin;
- ♦ Develop leadership skills;
- ♦ Work on projects of your choice;
- ♦ Become part of a network of parents of young children with disabilities who are knowledgeable about education, health, and social service issues; are active in their communities; support each other; and have fun together!

## Location/Dates

October 3-4, 2003

November 14-15, 2003

January 30-31, 2004

March 12-13, 2004

May 7-8, 2004

All sessions will be held at the **Pilgrim Center**, which offers many amenities and is in a beautiful atmosphere located on Green Lake near Ripon, Wisconsin.

All sessions will begin promptly at 4:00 p.m. Friday, and end by 4:00 p.m. Saturday. **People participating in PALs commit themselves to attend all 5 sessions.**

The workshop location was selected based on accessibility of the facility. If you need special accommodations (e.g., special meals, materials in alternate formats), contact Parent Projects at (800) 532-3321 or (608) 263-6745. Requests will be kept confidential.



## Okay...How do I sign up?

PALs is open to all parents or primary caregivers of young children with special needs. Couples say attending together strengthens their PALs experience. Individual parents are welcome and can bring a friend or relative, provided this person shares responsibility in the care of your child.

If you want more information or would like to register, call **Beth Swedeen** at **(608) 263-6745** or **Molly Murphy** at **(608) 262-9780**, or call toll-free **1-800-532-3321**.

Register soon -- PALs sessions are limited to 25 participants.

## What does it cost?

We ask that you make a commitment to attend all five sessions. In return for your time and energy, the Parents As Leaders program is free of charge. In addition, partial reimbursement for child care and travel expenses is available.

***This sounds too good to be true!***

*"I know where I stand now and feel I can actually be a leading part and not a following part."*

If this sounds like a program you would like to be involved in, but you have questions or see potential barriers to your participation, contact us to discuss ways we can help make this program possible for you. We are committed to providing a program that includes a diverse group of families and experiences.



## ***What's expected of me if I sign up?***

As a PALs participant, you choose an aspect of your community where you would like to see change--a school, your place of worship, or an organization. Activities may include involvement in your Birth to Three program, starting a support group, talking to other families, or representing the family perspective at a meeting or on a committee -- something you are interested in accomplishing.